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RURAL MUSIC. [SECOND PAPER.]

SOME readers of this journal have asked me to tell them more of my Western Vale, professing to see a curious microscopic study in what has been already written, and to recognise there a striking illustration of the fact that we are much more a musical people than our detractors suspect. I willingly comply with the request, and again go down to the land of flowers and grasses, of spangled hedge-rows, waving woods, and tranquil human lives.

Mention has already been made of B.—a little place, containing at the last census only 600 inhabitants. Thirty years ago, there were perhaps 200 more; for B. is slowly decaying under the influence of the movement which masses our population around great centres. At the time just referred to, B. represented a state of things now almost entirely passed away. Feudalism held it with a grasp which, though relaxing, was too tight to be shaken off, and the feudal spirit had its embodiment in the lord of the Norman castle whose walls frowned upon the tiny town. The ancestors of that terrible personage set up their own gallows, whereon the Petit Andre and Trois Echelles of the period carried out the decrees of mailed and gauntleted fate. Though no longer lord of life, the baron remained master of fortune. His frown abased, and his smile exalted. If he raised his voice in anger, the district trembled, and the dwellers for miles around no more dared to oppose his will than they ventured to withstand the rush of the tide in the roaring river. When men came surveying for the railway that now runs through the Vale, he blew so fierce a blast from his castle towers, that they carried their instruments—and the line—to a safe distance. He would so have scared away, had he been able, everything characteristic of the nineteenth century. He would have restricted education to lessons on the sacredness of game, and the duty of humility, and he would have committed to prison, as rogues and vagabonds, all who went amongst his people with incentives to thought. Imagine how primitive was the condition of B. after a changeless course of such fierce dominion. Yet music flourished there, as it often has under the shadow of tyrants, through the working of some mysterious compensatory law. The tyrant expressly tolerated it, perhaps because he had lingering memories of a long gone time when the stage knew him as an amateur actor. Direct encouragement he never gave, beyond permitting the church choir to sing a carol within his gates on Christmas eve, and the chapel band to play a movement from one of Haydn's symphonies—generally the *Surprise*—in his ante-room at the same season.

Baronial toleration sufficed, however, and music was cultivated in a manner the most open and ardent.

My earliest recollection is of a time when vocal music had sunk low, and instrumental music had risen high, entirely through the excellence of the chapel band aforesaid. For so small a place as B. these performers were a remarkable body. Each man worked hard, as tradesmen or mechanic, but all found time to acquire a proficiency upon which I now look back and marvel. The little orchestra had long stood alone, without a corresponding body of voices, when, one auspicious day, a placard appeared in the grocer's window at Gossip Corner, announcing that the organist of a neighbouring town would open a singing class on the method of Dr. Mainzer. At the head of this announcement appeared the words "Singing for the Million," and our local million accepted the idea with one voice. They talked of nothing else; so that it became a matter of less than secondary importance whether or no the noble lord's hounds would "throw off" at the home coverts next day, and whether Giles Turmut, having been caught with a rabbit in his pocket, and thoughts of a meat dinner in his head, would get three months or six. The Castle took no notice of the class, but that all was right in its exalted quarter appeared from the action of a militia colonel, known to his intimates as "Bob," and from the patronage bestowed by the vicar. Bob granted the use of a school-room over which he had control, and the clergyman benignly ordained that certain school-boys should be taught gratis. With everything in this comfortable trim the class started, having among its members all the young men and maidens in the community. For a time matters progressed well, but when it was discovered that the note Fa in the key of C was one thing, and in the key of G quite another, many members experienced a shock, and the faint-hearted ones dropped off. Nevertheless, the little organist persevered, and at last turned out singers enough for a Choral Society, which was established in solemn form, with rules and regulations of appalling length and complexity.

When, after several years of absence, I came again upon the scene, the Choral Society was found alive and flourishing. It met week by week in a roomy building, which a wildly speculative individual, long dead, had erected for manufacturing purposes of some impossible sort, and left standing forlorn and strange, amid the gardens and apple orchards. There, on an upper floor smelling very strongly of cheese stored below, the players and singers of B. made such music as they could, and



made it so lustily that an idler looking from the window might see distant strollers in the summer meadows, stop, turn their heads, and listen. We plumed ourselves upon our band, especially upon two double basses—the Sacred Harmonic Society in great London had only sixteen—and no less was the choiceness of our repertory a cause of pride. Recollections of that repertory have now, for me, a touch of pathos. Printed music was dear in those days, and the funds of our Society were no richer than the poverty of its members; therefore from single copies purchased or borrowed, we wrote others as "painfully," I should think, as the robins covered the dead Children in the Wood. How many laborious hours were mine! Aye, and how many happy ones! as I saw the language of Handel and Haydn, Spohr and Mendelssohn, drop from my pen's point upon the page. Yet the straitness of our means was a great tribulation, and at length came a resolve on my part, at mention of which "the boldest held his breath for a time." "Why not," said I, with the heroism of one who has nothing to lose, "knock at the castle gates for help?" Astounding idea! only possible to youthful rashness. The elders of our Society put it away from them. Before their eyes appeared the risk of tremendous wrath; blasting and blighting life and hope, as it had done on other occasions with no more pretext. Nevertheless I knocked, and was severely let alone. There may have been baronial oaths of the choicest mediæval quality, but a smooth-faced youth in his teens was hardly worth baronial powder and shot. What to do next? Said some one, "Give a concert." We acclaimed the ingenious speaker. "He has saved you," protested our harmless little vanity.

My recollections of our concert include three distinct and well-defined subjects, two of which are personal to myself, and I crave the reader's pardon for proposing to mention them. First of all, there was great popular excitement; such a thing as a public performance of music outside church or chapel being of rare occurrence in B. The tickets were bought up at once; many by eager applicants from villages miles away. It was a proud time for us all. Next, I have memory of a pair of white cotton gloves. For some reason supposed to outweigh the disadvantage of undignified youth, the present writer was appointed to conduct the performance; the honour entailing, of course, compliance with certain traditions. At that time the great Jullien flourished, and we knew all about his expansive shirt front and spotless kids. He stood ten thousand leagues above our heads, almost beyond the range of our thoughts; but it was deemed proper to emulate his gloves, in ever so humble a fashion. Kids, alas! were not for me. I had no money to spend in such wild extravagance. Hence the unforgotten "cottons;" and even as to those I should not like to swear that I obtained them at "first hand," by the token that they were uncomfortably long in the fingers. They served their turn, however, and I had the satisfaction of knowing that one, at least, of the conditions of my office was met. Let me now pass to the matter of a big drum.

With our orchestra strengthened by auxiliaries from the other Vale towns, something in the way of percussion seemed desirable, and I bethought myself of the drummer attached to a brass band that took its name from a neighbouring village. I interviewed the drummer—found him practising the organ in the little parish church—and secured his services. The presence of Jenkins and his capacious instrument on our platform was a decided "hit," both being popular as suggestive of the rural festivities wherein they often played a distinguished part. But during the first half of the concert the drum was provokingly silent. When would its deep boom be heard? Jenkins and I knew. With Handel's "Fixed in his everlasting seat," the drummer showed signs of life, and on the words, "His thunder roars," the drum exploded with a noise which made the audience jump in their seats. I had achieved a great orchestral *coup*, of a sort with which I have since become unpleasantly familiar. Altogether the concert was a success. Triumphantly we went through selections from the Masses of Haydn and Mozart, from the oratorios of Handel, and the anthems of Blow and Croft; preluding all with Jomelli's Chaconne in E flat.

Presently followed another concert, wholly instrumental, and therefore absolutely without precedent from one end of the Vale to the other. The idea of such an entertainment had never occurred to the boldest musician of the district, and we resolved to justify it by the most elaborate system of rehearsals. Carefully, therefore, did we work at the adapted symphonic movements, overtures, and arranged pieces forming the programme. But the heavens fought against us as the stars in their courses against Sisera. The time was autumn and the day one of sweltering heat beneath a lurid sky. The birds were songless and the leaves of the trees drooped languidly in the still air. Out in the meadows cattle lay panting under the hedgerows, scarcely noticing the call of the milkmaid. There was no hum of bees in the gardens, and even the tide crept lazily over the sandbanks of the river. Anxiety and oppression reigned, as if all nature waited fearfully for what was coming. Few people possessed energy enough to care for us or our music and those few soon had cause to think of something else. "We were in the midst of one of Haydn's merry finales, when the room was suddenly filled with blinding light, and the hall shook with the report of, as it seemed, ten thousand guns. There were cries from the scanty audience, and the joyous music stopped. Then came an awful pause—a silence that was agonising by contrast with the previous uproar, and yet not a silence, for we could hear the alarm cries of the birds, and the low of the frightened beasts in the fields, while from the river came a deep, angry murmur. The rest of that memorable evening was lightning and thunder, wind and rain, with such a confused noise, that the resumed music, played to a trembling and astonished company, could only be heard in the intervals of comparative peace. None dared to move when all save the storm, was over, and only after long anxious waiting did the company break up, going

away in twos and threes, along roads which, one moment, were so resplendent that the tracery of the overhanging foliage could be seen, and the next were swallowed up in blackness of darkness which intensified the shuddering horror of the thunder. Our Vale was the recognised practice range of heaven's artillery, but its oldest inhabitant could not, by ever so much racking his memory, parallel the "concert storm."

The ministrations of our enthusiastic musical company were not restricted to B. Now and then we journeyed to neighbouring places for the purpose of helping other societies, or to perform as Hal o' the Wynd fought, for our own hand. Once, greatly daring, we ventured into the *terra incognita* of transpontine regions, amongst a rough population of coal and iron miners. The two sides of the river knew little of each other, separated as they were by a mile and a half of rushing tide or treacherous sand. Hence a sullen sort of feud grew to be a tradition, the bovine dwellers among the meadows of the Vale despising the grimy underground workers, and these returning the compliment with interest. There were some who advised us to insure our instruments before venturing across the tideway; but we had skilfully bought peace by engaging a popular band of glee-singers, the boast of the mining district. These being our hostages, we confidently set foot on the other side, carrying with us the gospel of such art as we knew. The people received us in a spirit of good-humoured, but just a little contemptuous, toleration. They crowded the best inn's largest room, with more eagerness than reverence, and made no secret of the fact that, while understanding our instrumental music little, they did not care for it at all. In vain we plied them with the *Figaro* overture, at the traditional "three minutes" speed. Haydn's *Surprise* interested them not a whit, nor would they prick their ears even at the gay themes of *Tancredi*. All the evening we blessed the glee-singers, who, with *Dame Durden*, *The Alderman's Thumb*, *Come, bounteous May*, and such like popular effusions, averted a catastrophe. It was in no pride of spirit that we brought the concert to an end, but worse remained. The miners, adjourning as one man to the big drinking room below, invited the Vale men to come and hear what they could do. Of course we went—it was hardly safe to refuse—and were assailed with song and glee in the most exasperating "Beat that if you can" style. We never crossed the river again, but remained amongst our own gentler people, who had, as we believed, a better taste.

I will not pay my reader so poor a compliment as to suppose him asking why I have given publicity to such small details of musical doings in an obscure part of England thirty years ago. Inasmuch as there is no reason to believe the case of the Vale exceptional, he must see how strongly and steadily the flame of musical enthusiasm burns deep down among the masses of the English populace. I am not able to draw a comparison between my case and that which study of German rural life would present, but I entirely refuse to believe that in the

most musical of the countries called "musical," greater devotion to the art, more ardent pursuit of it, or greater ability in its practice exist. These qualities surely need no more than the favourable circumstances which are now developing on every hand in order to produce results such as may restore to England her rightful place. At the same time, with regard to my Vale, and, possibly, to many another fair tract of English land, it is discouraging to find such retrogression as the extinction of Choral Societies and the vanishing of small local orchestras signify. We might trace this, perhaps, to special circumstances—the migration of young life from rural districts into towns, and, as I indicated in my first paper, the substitution of key-board for orchestral instruments in chapels and churches. If the causes of the change lie here, it simply means that musical energy develops itself in other places and in new forms. Still—reproach me for sentiment if you like—I feel a pang of regret when the fact comes home that music has fled the sylvan scenes where I first made her acquaintance, and that silence reigns where Handel, Hadyn, Mozart, and Mendelssohn were wont to lift up their glorious voices.

JOSEPH BENNETT.

REMINISCENCES OF MUSIC AND MUSICIANS ABROAD.

III.—VIENNA.

DURING my three years' residence in the Kaiserstadt (1866—9), a strong and steadfast spirit of conservatism imparted quite a classical flavour to Viennese musical criticism, which it then pervaded, and, to no inconsiderable extent, still pervades. Without accusing the musical public of Vienna—still less the able critics who at that time formed and guided that public's opinions and judgments—of reactionary tendencies, I may be permitted to recall the fact that the amateurs and dilettanti of the Residenz, seventeen or eighteen years ago, had not long enjoyed an intimate acquaintance with Beethoven's later stringed quartets and P. F. sonatas, to the former of which *chef-d'œuvres* they had been introduced by Josef Hellmesberger, the elder, at a "Quatuor Cyklus," towards the end of the fifties, since which time he and his accomplished fellow-executants had played the mighty and monumental 130, 132, 135, over and over again, season after season, until his subscribers began to know something about them, and suspicious doubt had been transformed into rapturous conviction. With respect to the last four or five gigantic sonatas, Epstein and Von Buelow had, by persistently performing them in private houses, as well as in concert rooms, familiarised the best Vienna audiences with them, and secured to them that precious but limited popularity among experts, which they have scarcely even yet attained in this country. It was, indeed, but a little while before the Seven Days' War, which so effectually roused Austria from her intellectual and artistic as well as her financial and commercial lethargy, that the Kaiserstadt critics and musical

public *d'élite* had made up their minds that Beethoven's "higher developments" constituted the Ultima Thule of the divine art—the utmost attainable in the way of invention, science, and treatment. In a word, musical Vienna was Beethovenesque. Schubert had his partisans, and there was a Schumann faction, pushing, eager and dictatorial; but Brahms had made no mark to speak of, and the believers in Wagner formed so small a minority in musical circles that, but for the greater noisiness of their utterances and wildness of their appearance, their existence as a party would hardly have obtained any recognition by the "craft." Wagner—surprising as the fact may seem, viewed by the light of recent demonstrations indulged in by Vienna apropos of the great composer's death—was decidedly at a discount in the Austrian capital even as lately as fifteen years ago. How slightly even his most intelligible works—I mean, of course, intelligible to the million—had taken hold of the most instinctively and instructedly musical public in Europe may be gathered from the fact that *Tannhaeuser*, from its production on the 19th November, 1859, at the Kaernthner-Thor to the closing of that opera house in April, 1869—during, therefore, a period of ten years all but a few months—was only given forty-four times, recording an average of less than five performances per annum; whilst *Lohengrin*, brought out more than a year (19th August, 1858) before *Tannhaeuser*, was played sixty-nine times, or a fraction over six times per annum, during the eleven years intervening between that date and the "last night" at the Old House. In 1861 and 1866 it was only performed once a year—in 1867, not at all! During that year, the "Ferien" or summer-vacation having lasted exactly five weeks, three hundred and thirty-operatic performances took place at the Kaernthner-Thor; but the Imperial Intendant, as he himself told me towards the end of the autumn, could not spare one evening "for an opera which had hitherto entailed a dead loss of from five to eight hundred florins upon the management every time it had been given."

Vienna certainly did not take so readily to the music of the future as did Berlin. *Tannhaeuser*, for instance, had become a *pièce de résistance* at the Northern Athens when it was still "caviare to the general" in the Kaiserstadt. The latter, it is true, was alike forlorn in 1867 of a "heroic tenor" or a "heroic soprano." Gustav Walter could sing anything that had ever been written for a lyric tenor voice; but he lacked the volume of tone, and if I may say so, harshness of quality required to give due effect to the declamatory parts assigned by Wagner to his heroes. Labatt, again (*das schielende Vieh*, or "the squinting beast,") was the agreeable sobriquet bestowed by the Viennese public upon this artist, in virtue of a forbidding glass-eye he was in the habit of wearing), had all the productive force and metallic bray needed for the adequate vocal rendering of the *Tannhaeuser* and *Lohengrin* title-rôles; but, poor fellow, he had no ear—he has not got one yet, although he is still retained upon the

staff of the Hofoper, as Herr Joel used to be upon that of Evans' "in consideration of his long and valuable services"—and sang Wagner's difficult music so outrageously out of tune, besides being a person of singularly unprepossessing appearance and utterly devoid of dramatic instinct or intelligence, that the management did not dare to put him up as the *Fleshy Minstrel* or the *Fairy Knight*. Frau Dustmann was in many respects an admirable artist; but she laboured under two disabilities as far as the parts of Elizabeth and Elsa were concerned—her dimensions and her weight. Turning the scale at fifteen stone and being physically characterised by an exuberance of curve almost disproving the axiom that "there cannot be too much of a good thing," she was disqualified from representing a Thuringian Princess in a decline, prematurely wasted to shadow by hopeless love, or a young virgin Countess of Brabant "under a cloud" for sorcery and fratricide; though I have seen her play Agatha in tight-fitting white muslin, and observed with secret relish that a conspicuously stalwart huntsman had been told off by the stage manager for the onerous duty of catching her when it became incumbent upon her to swoon, in the last act. Fraeulein Ehnn, again, who was sufficiently slight and fragile in appearance fifteen years ago to impersonate the most ethereal or anemic heroines with an outward seeming of realism leaving nothing to be desired, had not at that time come to the front with sufficient prominence to justify the "Direction" in casting her in such "heavy" parts as those of Wagner's "leading ladies;" and Fraeulein Materna was nightily displaying an uncommonly handsome pair of legs, had been admiring audiences at the Carl, where she was engaged at 160 florins a month to play *Beinrollen*, "without a song," in comic operetta.

Berlin, on the other hand, in the year of Grace 1867, was able to put *Tannhaeuser* on the boards of the Hofoper with a cast that has never been beaten since the time, though it was equalled in all-round excellence last spring at Drury Lane, and last autumn at the Stadttheater, Hamburg. Of Albert Niemann of the *Tannhaeuser*, Betz as Wolfram, the Voggenthaler Elizabeth and the younger Grossi as Venus, it might have been surmised with equal *vraisemblance*—admirable was their vocal and dramatic impersonation of those characters—either that the parts by nature question had been expressly written for them by the great Saxon composer, or that they had been specially and providentially created for the exclusive purpose of filling those very rôles in an absolutely irreproachable manner. It may well have been that Berlin's good fortune in possessing the essentially Wagnerian artists accounted in no inconsiderable degree for the greater measure of public favour accorded to Wagner's earlier operas in Prussia than in the Austrian capital, where they cannot with truth be said to have struck root until long after they had taken to flourish exceedingly on the left bank of the Spree. *Par parenthèse* I may observe that, with respect to his later works, Vienna more than atoned for her former *laches*, and we

far ahead of Berlin—I am referring, of course, to the respective Court opera houses of those mighty musical cities, subventioned to the tune of thirty thousand a year each by their Imperial proprietors—by producing *Walkuere* just six years ago, and the rest of 'the Nibelungen Quadrilateral within the ensuing twenty-three months; whereas the first of German theatres has not yet, unless I be much mistaken, offered its subscribers a complete performance of the *Vorspiel und Trilogie*. Tastes change, as well as times. The *Meistersaenger von Nurnberg*, denounced at the time of its production in Munich (21st June, 1868) by the first of Viennese, if not of European critics, with such profuse opprobrium and scathing irony, that the musical public of the Kaiserstadt made up its mind to live and die without becoming cognisant of so abominable a work, has been performed fifty times to crowded houses in the new Hofoper, and *Walkuere* nearly as many.

If, beyond its own intrinsic merits, any collateral proof were required to establish the true greatness of Richard Wagner's music, such proof might be found in the circumstances that his most "advanced" operas, within the past decade, have stormed a path upon the theatrical citadel—that of Vienna—defended by all the champion manufacturers of public opinion on matters musical, and have established themselves solidly on the répertoire of the Hofoper, not, let me seeming add, as sops to a powerful faction, but as *Zugstuecke*—that is, pieces that infallibly "draw" the general public. And they do draw to some purpose. The last time I foregathered with my lamented friend, Franz Dingelstedt, he informed me that the receipts of the institution over which he so ably presided, had been over twelve thousand pounds during one season of ten months and a half from "Wagner-*llen*," *wiernights*." But during my sojourn in the Kaiserstadt, "Wagner-night" at the Kaernthner-Thor was not only a rarity, but a "function" to be avoided by the habitués of the opera-house, inasmuch as every body who was anybody knew that the management only put it on the bills *pour acquit de conscience*.

Leaving professional and amateur musicians out of the question for the moment, the principal and most formidable foes in Vienna to Wagner and his compositions were the three leading Austrian musical critics of that day, Dr. Hanslick, Dr. Schelle, and Count Laurencin. No man was ever endowed by nature with a brighter musical intelligence, or a more punctilious conscience than Edward Hanslick. His taste and judgment are, in the opinion of many excellent musicians, little short of infallible; no inducement upon earth, I feel sure, would move him to write a line at variance with his convictions. And yet, when I first made this eminent writer's acquaintance (for I should mention that, as a stylist, he holds a rank second to none of public writers in the German contemporary authors) Wagner's music was as intolerable to him as a red rag to a bull or a puddle to a domestic cat. He could find no virtue in the man or his works. Possibly there was little enough discoverable in the former, from a social or conventional point of view.

But Dr. Hanslick, no little to my surprise, was to all appearances irremediably insensible to the surpassing beauties, and even technical excellences of the latter. Nothing, from a literary point of view, could be more enjoyable than the eloquent invectives elicited from him by Wagner's innovations; nor has there probably ever been written, before or since, so brilliant or truly "slashing" a musical criticism as that contributed by him to the "Neue Freie Presse" immediately after the *premiere* of the *Meistersaenger*. It was, indeed, such a splendid piece of work that I sent it in translation to the *Daily Telegraph*, four columns of which journal were devoted to its reproduction in "minion" type, with the result, I have no doubt, that innumerable untravelled music-loving Britons contracted a life-long prejudice against the noblest, most genial, and most melodious of Wagner's lyric dramas. Some of the definitions with which this remarkable critical analysis sparkled were exquisitely felicitous—that, for instance, of "infinite melody;" "the recognised resolving of every convenient form into a shapeless, sensually intoxicating tinkle—the substitution of vague, incongruous melodising for independent, shapely-limbed melodies." Wagner's method of utilising "infinite melody" is also powerfully, if imminently, described. "A small *motivo* is struck up. Before it has had time to grow into a proper melody, or theme, it is bent, broken, set higher or lower by means of continual modulation and inharmonious shoving about; then carried on a little bit, then chopped up into pieces and cut short again, then repeated or imitated, now by this, now by that instrument. Anxiously shunning every resolving cadence, this toneless and muscleless figure flows forth into the Immeasurable, ever-renewing itself out of itself The melody is not entrusted to the voices, but to the orchestra; where being 'infinite,' it is wound out as though it were passing through a spinning-jenny. This melody-weaving orchestral accompaniment constitutes, in reality, Wagner's coherent and substantial sound-picture, the voice being compelled to accommodate itself to the accompaniment by also weaving phrases into it, half declaimed, half sung. This method of composition is diametrically opposed to that hitherto employed by every master. Heretofore, the melody for the voice was the first thing conceived by the sound poet—the *positive* thing, to which the accompaniment (however free or complex in treatment), was made subordinate. As a rule, one could divine the accompaniment, or an accompaniment, to the given melody for the voice; and the accompaniment thus, in some sort, became one's own unsubstantial property. Under the Wagner 'method' the voice-part is not only something incomplete, but is, in fact, *nothing at all*; the accompaniment is everything—is an independent symphonal creation—is an orchestral *fantasia* with *ad libitum* vocal accompaniments."

Dr. Schelle, Hanslick's successor on the old *Presse*, when Michel Etienne persuaded the leading Viennese critic to enlist under the banner of the *Neue Freie*, was a less impulsive and passionate writer than Hanslick. A profoundly erudite musician and con-

firmed "classicist," his enmity to Wagner as a composer was of a colder, but no less deadly character than that of his illustrious contemporary. He was a man of delicate health, weak digestion, infirm of body and of temper; the calm, order and symmetry of the "old school" of music soothed his nerves and refreshed his spirit, whilst the fervid agitations and restless tentativeness of Wagner's compositions vexed his soul, clashed with his convictions, and sometimes worried him to the verge of frenzy. To the end of his days—he died quite suddenly only a few months ago—he strove against tone-painting and its prophet with a stern, implacable doggedness peculiarly his own. Regarding Wagner as the mammon of unrighteousness, musically considered, he fought him "wherever found," after the manner recommended by Artemus Ward for invariable adoption towards the Red Man. Almost his last important critical effort was a series of masterly *feuilletons* upon the Stage-Tone-Play, *Parsifal* and its rendering last summer at Bayreuth. These articles were written with undiminished power, but betrayed a consciousness in their accomplished author that he was no longer combating on the winning side, as of yore, but vainly striving to sweep back a resistless wave of hero-worship. During my residence in Vienna, I saw a great deal of Dr. Schelle, who was a difficult man to know intimately, by reason of his retiring habits and constitutional shyness, and learnt to esteem him very highly, not only as an able musical critic, but as a man of absolute truthfulness and sensitive honour. To those for whom he entertained a liking he was, moreover, a delightful companion, teeming with information and anecdote, rendered piquant by the flavour of his own dry, caustic humour.

Count Laurencin, a quaint and memorable figure in Viennese musical circles for more than a quarter of a century, whose verbal comments upon compositions and performances, were the terror of "the profession," and who wrote his criticisms with a pen dipped, figuratively speaking, in gall and sulphuric acid, was another inveterate, irreconcilable anti-Wagnerian. This bitter but eminently knowledgeable little gentleman may still be alive, although he was pretty old when I last sat beside him during a quartet rehearsal at Joseph Hellmesberger's, fifteen years ago. If he be, I doubt not that the recent bereavement sustained by musical mankind left him unmoved, save, perhaps, by a sour spasm of rejoicing that he had nothing more to fear from Richard Wagner's productiveness. The critical Count, a natural son of the Emperor Ferdinand, but so indifferently provided for by his august father that he was fain to eke out his slender means with the modest salary paid to him for his contributions to a second-class Vienna newspaper, was so diminutive of stature as almost to belong to the dwarfish category, dark of complexion, with glittering eyes, gleaming teeth, and an angry expression of countenance that by no means belied his disposition. When listening to, or discussing Wagner's music, he was apt to foam slightly at the mouth, and to grind his teeth in a highly alarming manner.

Under the influence of Mozart, or even of Papa Haydn, the ferocity of his look would something abate; but, under the most soothing circumstances, he was only, as it were, "lying by for a chance to bite." Musicians are proverbially irritable folk; but Count Laurencin was the most choleric of his tribe I ever met—and Richard Wagner was his "favourite foe."

WM. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

STREET ARTISTS.

THE advance of civilisation bids fair to work, amongst many welcome changes, some which we could dispense with. English people, according to continental opinion, take their pleasures sadly, and there can be little doubt but that the influence of Puritanical doctrines is felt even at the present time. A London fast-day or Sunday is an unlovely thing—the busiest thoroughfares being a dismal monotony of shuttered windows and closed doors, expressing with uncalled-for ostentation that the City is on its best religious behaviour and wishes all manner of men to bear witness to the fact that no work is being carried on. But, if English towns are unlovely on the Sabbath, it can hardly be advanced in their favour that they are very mirth-provoking or inspiring at the best of times; while that section of the community which once added a needful spark of relief to the serious aspect of every-day life, seems likely soon to be improved off the face of the streets. Men of the present generation can call to mind numerous *alfresco* displays—musicians, jugglers, conjurors, fantoccini shows, and divers other peripatetic entertainments—which have either disappeared at the present day, or have their existence in hole-and-corner districts, leaving the localities they once favoured to the tender mercies of the German bands and those dreadful instruments of torture, piano organs. The old barrel organ was a sufficiently malevolent thing, as others, besides Mr. Babbage, discovered to their cost, but, the piano-organ is simply a fiendish invention, before which all the apparatus of the chamber of torture fades into insignificance. Like the composer of a fantasia for the pianoforte, the arranger of the popular melodies battered out on the piano-organ has ornament for his sole idea, and to this end he sacrifices all else—tune, time, and rhythm. Long before the dweller in a quiet neighbourhood is aware of what tune the dreaded thing is hammering at, the "tum-tum-tum" percussion of the bass can be absolutely felt, and to brain-workers the sensation of this continued drumming or throbbing is peculiarly maddening. German bands and piano-organs have it all their own way, and for them the higher forms of street art appear to have been abandoned. Perhaps the growth of music halls may have something to do with the disappearance of itinerant performers from our streets, and the artists themselves may entertain the notion that a real stage is more respectable than the open sky and muddy road. But these worthies are not apt to trouble themselves with more than concerns the convenience of their calling, while it assuredly never enters into the mind of one of the

elect to consider that he represents an ancient, and in some ages reputable race.

The Egyptians were skilful conjurors; the Roman funambulists were held in no light esteem; our own glee-men were in repute during the early ages of minstrelsy; and the juggler once held a higher position than is generally known. The word "juggler" is a corruption of the French "*jogleur*" or " *jongleur*" (derived from a Latin root), which in its original sense applied to minstrels, or people who sang. By-and-bye the term lost its respectability and specific meaning; rope-dancers, and exponents of feats of agility, strength, or sleight-of-hand becoming comprised within its elastic scope, until the primitive sense was entirely lost or merged in its later acceptation. Certainly, at the present time, the name "juggler" does not suggest the remotest association with music or singing. Presently the term was put to further uses in the days of Elizabeth and the Stuarts, and became a synonym for witchcraft; while it also passed into the language as an euphemism for Jesuitical or political subterfuge. The present century, however, has known the juggler simply as the street artist who is adroit in the manipulation of swords, daggers, balls, &c., a number of which he continues to keep in motion simultaneously. The tricks are familiar enough, and are probably as old as the hills. A juggler is now occasionally to be seen about London, but from his appearance the profession would seem to have fallen on evil days. The salmon-coloured fleshings, the spangled fillet, and the lavishly-ornamented box, wherein the paraphernalia of his trade were wont to be carried, are all gone; the stock of "properties" is painfully reduced, and the entire show of a depressing, rather than an exciting description. A gentleman who throws potatoes high into the air, and suffers them to break upon his unprotected forehead, and who furthermore breaks stones with his fist, is to be met with at suburban fairs and race meetings; but we can hardly admit him into the companionship of the *élite* of the profession—people who have studied an art, and who practise it. Nor can the negro who casts willow wands as swiftly and as far as ever arrow was propelled by the bow of yore be admitted into the category; nor can the "purse trick" even be accepted as the legitimate development of the open-air profession of legerdemain.

The Punch and Judy showman still plies his trade, it is to be feared, to indifferent audiences; but what has become of the Marionette show-man, with the wonderful pipes, who in his capacity of Greek chorus, was wont to inform the assembly that "the skelington will now reunite hisself together again in separate bits;" what of the wheezy old gentleman with the mournful dulcimer who used to whisper fragments of "The Merrie Maids of England" between his asthmatic spasms; what of the clever pair who played Beethoven and Mendelssohn on the pianoforte and violin with correct taste and feeling; what of the old organs with the mechanical figures, whose actions were always at variance with the sounds they were supposed to produce; what of the gentleman with the pantomime eye-glass and ruddled

nose, who was popularly considered to represent Paul Pry, but who always sang an absurd ditty concerning one "Billy Barlow?" Were these all the last representatives of their particular types, and have they vanished to return no more, like the dwarf concertina player, who, after being for years a familiar figure, wet weather or dry, under the wall of the National Gallery, recently succumbed to the joint influences of consumption and gin; or have they departed mainly that their places shall be filled by other individuals who, like Thames trout, are fated to feed where others fed before? The sense of kindness which clings around vanishing memories may have something to do with it, but certain it is that these old enlivener of the highways and byways were not unwelcome friends, and the child is to be pitied whose early excursions from the nursery region are not gladdened with any extraordinary sight, due to the agency of the street artist. We are hardly ever likely to see the Indian conjuror in our midst, and to behold those wonders of deceptive artifice to which the feats of European *prestidigitateurs* are as child's play—that is, according to popular report, though due allowance should be made for heated imaginations in a hot climate—unless such an exhibition were to be given in the Egyptian Hall, or some other recognised abode of modern magicians. However much of mystery we may owe to the East, it is nevertheless pleasant to think that European wit and sagacity sometimes have succeeded in huccising the wily Oriental; and no better example can be needed than the exploit of Hermann, who, having been compelled to buy eggs at an exorbitant price by a hawker in Constantinople, gravely proceeded to break one shell after another, and fish from the putrid contents a gold piece. The merchant speedily repented him of his bargain, and, flinging back the purchase-money, hobbled off with what eggs were remaining. Hermann followed at a discreet distance, and found the vendor of premature chickens busily engaged in demolishing his wares. It is needless to say that no golden pieces rewarded his exertions.

DESMOND L. RYAN.

IT is, we believe, the intention of the eminent violinist, M. Prosper Sainton, to retire from the public platform on attaining his seventieth year, which he will do in June next. In all probability he will take a formal farewell at a concert specially given in St. James's Hall, towards the end of May. Madame Sainton-Dolby will perhaps be induced to sing on that occasion, but whether the distinguished contralto emerge from her retirement or not, the host of friends whom her husband's artistic merit, and fine personal qualities have secured, will rally round him and make the occasion a success. It would be premature to enlarge upon M. Sainton's claims at the present moment, and we are not sure that it would be necessary at any time. The accomplished Frenchman has lived amongst us forty years, and during all that period has borne himself like a true artist and gentleman. In honouring such a one we discharge an obligation and exercise a privilege.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters connected with the literary department of this Journal must be addressed to the EDITOR.

Communications intended for insertion will receive no notice unless accompanied by the name and address of the sender.

The EDITOR cannot undertake to return articles of which he is unable to make use.

All business letters should be addressed to the PUBLISHERS. Advertisements should reach the Office not later than the 7th in order to insure insertion in the issue of the month current.

The EDITOR begs to thank numerous correspondents who have forwarded copies of verses for the "Poet's Corner." In many cases their non-insertion must be taken to imply that the subjects are considered unsuitable or hackneyed.



THE LUTE.

LONDON, THURSDAY, MARCH 15, 1883.

RICHARD WAGNER.

Born, May 22nd, 1813. Died, February 13th, 1883.

In taking from us Richard Wagner, death has deprived the world of a commanding character. This we unfeignedly lament, for humanity is not now rich in individual greatness. Yet we have no right to rail at fate. Wagner lived for nearly seventy years, and his work was done. Of his system, so far as he had developed it, we knew all there was to tell, and age had taken from him the combative ardour required to make a further advance successful. In good time, therefore, he was called away. Around his grave the world met to acknowledge the gift of genius and of the high personal qualities without which no man can make his mark, and leave behind him a heritage of fame. This was fitting in all, but especially honourable in those who had fought the living Wagner foot to foot, opposing themselves to every advance of his peculiar doctrines. Now the time is approaching when public opinion will have to formulate its verdict upon the deceased composer, and estimate the true value of his belief and works. It would be presumptuous to anticipate the decision; but it is not, perhaps, rash to forecast one running midway between the claims of impassioned friends and implacable foes. Public opinion will note the many and singular weaknesses of Wagner's character, his unscrupulous tactics, and his strange inconsistencies; just as it will give due heed to theories of musico-dramatic reform, which, pushed to a fantastic extreme, became as objectionable as the faults sought to be amended. What was good in Wagner, art will appropriate, for the rest, let us hope that the artistic conscience will reject, and the artistic memory forget it. This done, the late master may occupy a lower place than his partisans claim for him, but it will be a rightful place, and better the humblest reality than the most exalted sham.

UTI

DWA

opranio

Alto.

Tenor.

Bass.

Bass.

Accomp.



* To

UTE". N^o 3. MARCH 15TH 1883.This Part-Song is published separately. Price 2^d

“THE VIOLET’S FATE.”

Part-Song.

Words by

DWARD OXFORD.

Music by

FRANZ ABT.

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Allegretto.

Soprano.

Alto.

Tenor.

Bass.

Accomp?

Allegretto.

* To be sung without Accompaniment.

P & W. 848.

poco a poco cresc.

spring was born; It smil'd . . . in its
 poco a poco cresc.

spring was born; It smil'd . . . in its
 poco a poco cresc.

spring was born; It smil'd . . . in its
 poco a poco cresc.

spring was born; It smil'd . . . in its
 poco a poco cresc.

spring was born; It smil'd . . . in its
 poco a poco cresc.

home so co-sy . . . and sweet, . . . And
 f

home so co-sy . . . and sweet, . . . And
 f

home so co-sy . . . and sweet, . . . And
 f

home so co-sy . . . and sweet, . . . And
 f

home so co-sy . . . and sweet, . . . And
 f

dreamt . . . all the day in its cool . . . re
 p

dreamt . . . all the day in its cool . . . re
 p

dreamt . . . all the day in its cool . . . re
 p

dreamt . . . all the day in its cool . . . re
 p

dreamt . . . all the day in its cool . . . re
 p

treat, ... And dreamt all the day ... in its
 treat, ... And dreamt all the day ... in its
 treat, ... And dreamt all the day ... in its
 treat, ... And dreamt all the day ... in its
 treat, ... And dreamt all the day ... in its
 cool re treat
 Its soft voice it would raise, ... And full sweet was its
 Its soft voice it would raise, ... And full sweet was its
 Its soft voice it would raise, ... And full sweet was its
 Its soft voice it would raise, ... And full sweet was its

lay; . . . It sang . . . of the sun . . . and his
 lay; . . . It sang . . . of the sun . . . and his
 lay; . . . It sang . . . of the sun . . . and his
 lay; . . . It sang . . . of the sun . . . and his

poco a poco cresc.

gol den ray; . . . It sang . . . of the
 poco a poco cresc.

gol den ray; . . . It sang . . . of the
 poco a poco cresc.

gol den ray; . . . It sang . . . of the
 poco a poco cresc.

gol den ray; . . . It sang . . . of the
 poco a poco cresc.

flow'rs . . . that near . . . to it grew, . . . And
 flow'rs . . . that near . . . to it grew, . . . And
 flow'rs . . . that near . . . to it grew, . . . And
 flow'rs . . . that near . . . to it grew, . . . And

mf

But night . . . at . . . last came, . . . With

But night . . . at . . . last came, . . . With

But night . . . at . . . last came, . . . With

But night . . . at . . . last came, . . . With

winds . . . sharp . . . and bleak; . . . More shel . . . ter . . . the

winds . . . sharp . . . and bleak; . . . More shel . . . ter . . . the

winds . . . sharp . . . and bleak; . . . More shel . . . ter . . . the

winds . . . sharp . . . and bleak; . . . More shel . . . ter . . . the

poco rit.

vi o let fain . . . would seek; . . . With

vi o let fain . . . would seek; . . . With

vi o let fain . . . would seek; . . . With

vi o let fain . . . would seek; . . . With

più ritar.

pain . . . it bow'd down . . . its . . . de li cate
 pain . . . it bow'd down . . . its . . . de li cate
 pain . . . it bow'd down . . . its . . . de li cate
 pain . . . it bow'd down . . . its . . . de li cate
 pain . . . it bow'd down . . . its . . . de li cate
 head, . . . And . . . lo! . . . in . . . the morn ing 'twas
 head, . . . And . . . lo! . . . in . . . the morn ing 'twas
 head, . . . And . . . lo! . . . in . . . the morn ing 'twas
 head, . . . And . . . lo! . . . in . . . the morn ing 'twas
 head, . . . And . . . lo! . . . in . . . the morn ing 'twas
 fa ded and dead, . . . 'twas fa ded and
 fa ded and dead, . . . 'twas fa ded and
 fa ded and dead, . . . 'twas fa ded and
 fa ded and dead, . . . 'twas fa ded and
 fa ded and dead, . . . 'twas fa ded and
 pp slower. >

molto crese.

THE best-known French composers, artists, publishers, and critics have formed themselves into a committee in order to promote the erection of a monument to Hector Berlioz. This fact we announced and commented upon two months ago, since when the movement has spread to London. The Paris Committee, fully aware of the esteem in which Berlioz is held here, communicated with Mr. Thomas Chappell (Chappell and Co.), requesting him to form an auxiliary body with a view to collect subscriptions. Mr. Chappell at once agreed to do so, and had no difficulty in obtaining the co-operation of persons well-known in our musical world. The London Committee now includes among its members Sir J. Benedict, Messrs. Halle, Cusins, Hueffer, Engel, Bennett, Sullivan, and many others of influence. It is hoped, we believe, to collect about £300 as England's contribution towards the proposed memorial. There should be no difficulty in obtaining so modest an amount from the amateurs who sympathise with the genius of Berlioz, his gallant struggle against an adverse fate, and the decree which ordained his death before a brighter day for his works began to dawn. Few who have in any measure estimated that which Berlioz did and suffered, will refuse a practical testimony of their interest in the man and his music. He is dead, and neither honour nor contumely can reach him, yet in a sense he lives, and will be always with us. Let us act with a consciousness of the fact, and make the present, which is the heir of the past, retrieve its errors.

THE full programme of the Leeds Musical Festival has not yet appeared, and it would be vain to speculate with regard to its less important details. A shrewd guess may, however, be made as to the greater works upon which the Committee are looking with a favourable eye. In all likelihood, we shall see *Elijah* set down for Wednesday morning, and there is more than a chance that Mr. F. Clay's *Sardanapalus* will be produced in the evening of the same day, together with a short choral and orchestral work by Mr. Arthur Sullivan, conductor of the Festival. Raff's oratorio, *The End of the World; Judgment; The New World*, may be heard on Thursday morning. It is in some respects a novel work; the orchestra having several descriptive Intermezzi. Hence the name "Symphony Oratorio." The vocal solos are chiefly recitations of passages from the *Revelations*, but the choruses are most important, and nearly all contrapuntal. On Thursday evening we should not be surprised to find Mr. Barnby's *Ninety-Seventh Psalm* in the programme, along with an organ concerto composed by Mr. Villiers Stanford. Friday morning will perhaps be devoted to Professor Macfarren's oratorio *King David*, while Niels Gade may have a place of honour in the evening. On Saturday morning the chances are in favour of Beethoven's Mass in D, and the *Lobgesang*. Should the foregoing works be actually performed, no one will complain of want of enterprise, or lack of variety. In these respects the Festival will have a right to challenge comparison with the best. We understand that Mr. Walter Parratt is engaged to play Mr. Stanford's concerto, and to preside at the organ throughout the week.

THERE are testimonials and testimonials, some worthy, some unnecessary, others undeserved. In the first category we place the splendid present of £800 made to Professor Macfarren on his seventieth birthday, by his friends and pupils. Professor Macfarren deserves well of his country. As a man, he has consistently borne the white flower of a blame-

less life; as a musician he has upheld the dignity of his art, has enriched the catalogue of its masterpieces, and sustained before the world the musical honour of England. No recompense can be too great for long and arduous services such as these; and in his knowledge that he commands the respect and admiration of every music lover, Professor Macfarren doubtless recognises a better testimonial than even the material one just received. All of us hope that he may long live to enjoy the rewards he has earned. We observe that it is proposed to offer Sir George Elvey a mark of respect and esteem in the shape of his own portrait. Sir George, it will be remembered, has recently taken to himself a wife and retired from the profession. The occasion is, therefore, opportune for some proof of kindly regard. Many well-known names appear in the list of the Committee, and Dr. Verrinder will be glad to receive subscriptions towards the object in view. Turning to another member of the "old guard," we express the sentiments of all who know him either personally or by repute, when we avow deep regret at the illness with which Sir Michael Costa was seized a few days ago, and sincere thankfulness that it proves to be unattended by danger. Our prayer is that the distinguished chief, so long identified with the cause of music in this country, may be spared for years to come, rich in the enjoyment of his honours.

GOUNOD AND VERDI were "interviewed" by Martin Roeder upon the subject of Wagner, a short time before the latter's death. The great French maestro is reported to have expressed himself as follows:—"Wagner is the cleverest dramatic musician that ever lived. But he is blind—his followers have robbed him of his sight. If this extraordinary man had pursued the course in which, with *Tannhaeuser* and *Lohengrin*, he captivated the hearts of his countrymen, and of the whole educated artistic world, we should have before us a phenomenon of art, such as the world had never heretofore beheld. As it is, however, Wagner will perish; and he himself has dug his own grave." Verdi found fault with Wagner's disciples and so-called "school," far more severely than with the composer or his compositions. "Highly as I esteem the man and artist, I would strictly forbid any art student, not thoroughly grounded in every branch of simple and double counterpoint, to meddle with a Wagner score. All our most gifted young composers—I can count them for you on my fingers—are bent upon imitating 'il maestro tedesco.' They cannot get on nowadays without ten trombones and as many horns—with the aid of which they bring forth abortions which only help to bring discredit upon the name of Wagner. Personally, I honour Wagner, although he has held me up to scorn; but I have a horror of his school!"

WAGNER prided himself upon being a typical German, and undoubtedly was so in many respects. But he offered a striking contrast to the majority of his countrymen in one regard, viz., his steadfast aversion to orders of chivalry, medals, and other "outward and visible" honorific distinctions. A greedy worship of these baubles is one of the leading traits of German character, and Wagner's frequently reiterated refusals to accept any of them were an inexhaustible source of wonder to the sons of the Fatherland. He had, however, two good and sufficient reasons for rejecting the collars, stars and crosses offered to him by a score of emperors, kings, and princes. In the first place, he held that "monarchical badges" did not befit the breast of an "inveterate Republican," as he delighted to style himself; in the second, he appraised his own genius

so highly as to deem it far above reward or recognition by symbols of Imperial or Royal grace. Nineteen years ago the Chapter of the Maximilian Order ("Pour le Mérite") solicited its Chief, the King of Bavaria, to confer the Grand Cross of that exalted Order upon Richard Wagner. His Majesty was willing; but the great composer respectfully declined to accept the decoration. Shortly afterwards the late King Victor Emmanuel sent him the "Soli Santi" *au cou*—in other words, the Commandery of the venerable Order of SS. Maurice and Lazarus. This high distinction was also "declined with thanks." In 1876, upon the occasion of the great *Nibelung* production, all the German sovereigns, including the King of Prussia—who consented to look over Wagner's democratic proclivities in consideration of his transcendent genius—proffered their emblems of chivalric honour to him, as likewise did the Emperors of Austria and Russia, the Kings of Denmark, Spain, Sweden, &c. One and all were courteously rejected; and Wagner remained to his dying day the only German composer of any eminence whose button-hole knew not adornment by the least shred of parti-coloured riband.

* * * * *

There was a genial side to Wagner's masterful character, which found expression in large and generous hospitality, love of good cheer and jollifications, a tendency to indulge in badinage, and, above all, an exquisite tenderness of manner towards his consort's children, as well as his own, that rendered him an object of little less than adoration to them. When he took to wife Cosima Liszt, some time Frau von Buelow, she brought him three step-daughters, the issue of her union with the eminent pianist of that name. To these girls, Daniela, Blandine, and Isolde, he was the tenderest of fathers. Had they been his own flesh and blood, he could not have loved them better, or treated them more kindly. When, however, a son of his very own was born to him, his joy and exultation knew no bounds. He purchased a vast quantity of costly gay-coloured silken stuffs, to make hangings for little Siegfried's nursery, and yards upon yards of rosebuds, sewn together and made up into garlands, with which he decorated the walls of that apartment, and the cradle in which his baby heir reposed. His only weakness in the way of personal embellishment, displayed itself in his indoors apparel—gorgeous dressing-gowns, resplendent smoking-caps, many-hued silken socks and "decorative" slippers. In the streets he was almost always to be seen in old clothes, for which he had a clinging and loyal affection. One short overcoat, of a yellowish, bilious tint, he wore in cold weather for nearly thirty years, and could not be induced to give it up. Once his wife, moved to indignation, by the dilapidated condition and squalid shabbiness of the garment in question, hid it away from him. As, however, he gave no one in his house any peace whilst his "old friend" was missing, she was fain (with many protests and remonstrances) to restore it to him. He wore it frequently last summer at Bayreuth, during the abominable weather that prevailed whilst *Parsifal* was undergoing rehearsal; and in the course of the past winter, the "sopr' abito giallo del gran maestro sassone" got to be as well known in Venice as the Lion of St. Mark itself.

By strange coincidence, two of the foremost monthlies for March contain articles on Richard Wagner, both written, of course, before his death. *Harper's Monthly* devotes its pages to a minute account of the recent production of *Parsifal*, with illustrations of some of the most important scenes

and characters, while Mr. Edmund Gurney contributes to the *Nineteenth Century* a brilliant, yet thoughtful and intelligent disquisition on the theories of "Wagner and Wagnerism"—and is decidedly unfavourable to both. He combats, one by one, the dogmas of the new faith, asserting that they are logically and radically opposed to the first principles of art, and are found wanting in the very points in which their upholders profess to find their strength. A more slashing, unmerciful exposure of the "one man" creed has never been penned. He asserts that, founded on such ideas, the "Music of the Future" will be purely and entirely orchestral; "Colour has become the bane of music, and Wagner and his orchestra have been the chief cause of its becoming so." The result of such a development would be the banishment of music from the home and its confinement to the theatre; a consummation, which would at once militate against the system whence it had sprung. When music ceases to be domestic, it will cease to exist.

BERNARDO POLLINI, the lessee of the Hamburg Opera House deserves a tribute of public gratitude for his smartness and enterprise in "spotting" a second Wachtel on the box of a hack-cab and undertaking the entire cost of the youthful Jehu's vocal training and musical education. The similarity between Wachtel and Boetel's antecedents, strange to say, extends to the quality, character and compass of their respective voices, tenors of great volume, carrying power and hardness of *timbre*, ranging from the middle bass *Re* to *Do* in alt. Boetel, fortunately for his *impresario*—who has already invested a considerable sum of money in preparing him for the stage—is an intelligent young fellow enough, by no means bad-looking or devoid of dramatic instinct. He is gifted with a retentive memory and what is technically termed a "good stage presence." Of still greater importance to the European musical public—destined, in all probability, to listen to him for a score of years to come, or more—is the fact that he has a good ear, and therefore sings in tune. Of course, Pollini, in the ten years' engagement concluded with him by Boetel, has "reserved all rights" of farming out his *protégé* to other managers; and offers have poured in from all the leading theatres in Germany since his first appearance roused the usually undemonstrative Hamburgers to so high a pitch of enthusiasm. Hitherto he has only accepted one offer out of Hamburg—that made to him by Director Engel, the renowned "Commission-Councillor" of Berlin, for the summer season at Kroll's, on the half-profit system. As Kroll's is the largest, as well as the most popular theatre in the German capital, and always fills to the roof on the least pretext of a "striking novelty" or "great attraction," Herr Boetel will probably make about £100 a night during his Berlin engagement—not bad for a tenor of twenty-three in his first public year. Engel, who is a wag in his way, is reported to have said rather a good thing about his arrangement with Boetel, qualified by one of his intimate friends as a somewhat risky speculation. "Half profits!" objected the latter; "those are very high terms, indeed. Suppose he should not please the public?" "It would not matter much to me," replied Engel; "if he should turn out no good as a tenor, I can always utilise him to drive my pony-carriage. *Pony soit qui mal y pense!*"

THE Birmingham Festival Committee are about to negotiate with Signor Verdi for a work to be produced in 1885. We wish them all success, without entertaining much hope.

CRYSTAL PALACE CONCERTS.

WHEN Mr. August Manns temporarily forsook the land of cakes to re-open the season of classical Concerts, lest the sudden alternation from pantomime to pure art should prove demoralising to the members of the permanent band, he chose a programme comprising a single novelty, and some well worn examples. The instrumental selection consisted of Berlioz's overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*; Litoff's concerto symphonique for pianoforte and orchestra, No. 5, in C minor; the gavotte for Mozart's *Idomeneo*; solos for the pianoforte; and Beethoven's C minor symphony. It would need a discursive pen to write round about such a theme as this. The Concert in reality called for little beyond a mere chronicle of facts, and it is to be regretted that Mr. Manns did not make an attempt to render the commencement of the musical year a little more imposing. No particular enthusiasm was expressed over the overture to *Benvenuto Cellini*, although the work itself, from its fullness of colour and breadth of effect, is calculated to produce an impression even upon an indiscriminating audience. From the piano concerto, we are not inclined to judge too highly of Mr. Litoff's matured style, which may be best described as "hysterical Chopin." He has his good moments, truly, and writes for the solo instrument with a sort of a slap-dash freedom which is a sure passport to favour with pianists, who love nothing so well as an opportunity to perform gymnastics. That anyone could derive any benefit from listening to the concerto symphonique in C minor, is difficult to believe. The auditors did not care greatly for the work, and it is doubtful whether any pianist will emulate M. Breitner's example, and select it as a vehicle for the display of his manipulative skill. The C minor symphony went as usual, save that the first movement lost some of its incisiveness and brilliancy through being taken too slow. Madame Patey was the vocalist, her greatest effect being made in Randegger's tastefully scored song, "Peacefully Slumber."

Mr. Ebenezer Prout's dramatic cantata, *Alfred*, formed the principal part of the programme at the twelfth Saturday Concert, the composer conducting in person, and the work being supported by Miss Annie Marriott, Mr. Vernon Rigby, Mr. Bridson, and the Borough of Hackney Choir (for whom it was originally written). Mr. Prout ostensibly is a great believer in the modern forms of music, but in his own composition no trace of this is observable. The Concert was preceded by Siegfried's Death-march from *Götterdämmerung*, wretchedly played.

The following Concert must be passed over in silence, since it brought forth not even the proverbial *ridiculus mus*. Were the stock works put up to save rehearsal, or because Mr. Manns could not get back from Glasgow in time?

On the 3rd inst., a Wagner commemorative performance was given, consisting of Siegfried's death, the *Tannhäuser* overture, Elizabeth's prayer, Siegfried Idyll, introduction to Act III. of *Lohengrin*, a fantasia from *Die Meistersinger*, the Vorspiel and Isolde's Liebestod from *Tristan und Isolde*, the "Good Friday Magic" from *Parsifal*, the Walkürenritt, and the Kaiser-Marsch. Such an assortment of odds and ends hardly reflects credit upon the Crystal Palace musical executive. It may appear ungracious to speak otherwise than in terms of tenderness of one whom death has so lately removed from the busy world; but were we asked to estimate the artistic value of such a *pot-pourri*, we should be obliged to say "none whatever." No matter what *Parsifal* may be like, its

quality cannot be gauged by a jumble such as the Good Friday Magic. Such inflictions as these Concert arrangements would never have been possible without the express sanction of the man who for so many years preached loudly and continuously about the unity, and consequent indivisibility of music and drama.

The *rentrée* of Herr Joachim was the feature of the fifteenth Concert, but of this more anon.

BACH CHOIR.

THE idea of the Bach Choir devoting its energies to Bruch seems at the offset as though the members were anxious to hasten from one extreme to the other, and to bridge the gulf which stretches between one of the greatest musicians of the past and one of the smallest luminaries of to-day. Herr Max Bruch, like many modern lesser lights, has a certain number of disciples—else he would not have been able to push his way into the conductorship of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society, a post for which men like Mr. F. H. Cowen and Mr. John Francis Barnett were candidates—but this select following can scarcely make him the great musician they desire. Perhaps Herr Bruch hardly felt the Liverpudlian atmosphere congenial, as (so the Bach Choir programme informs the world) he has resigned the conductorship, with the intention of making a professional tour in America, after which he takes up the wand at Breslau. Perhaps it was as well to give his *Odysseus* the chance of a hearing, for, as that is adjudged the composer's best work it would be ungracious to permit Herr Bruch to quit these shores leaving the Londoners in ignorance of his finest effort. Nevertheless, the result was undeniably depressing. There are fine things in the score of *Odysseus*, but all the effects are laid on with so heavy a hand, the colour is so unsparingly used, and the tone so monotonous, that the hearer soon becomes weary. The fact is that the classics are heavy in music, unless treated with the finest and rarest discernment—in the manner, for instance, in which Mendelssohn treated *Antigone*. Evidently it had flashed across Herr Bruch's mind that he could do as well as Mendelssohn, if not better; hence his choice of the heroic subject. It must not be forgotten that Herr Bruch set to music the libretto of *Lorely*, worked upon, but not completed by Mendelssohn. It was a daring act, and appears to have been crowned with the success it deserved. The *Odysseus* was first produced at the Bremen "Sing-Akademie" in May, 1872, since when it appears to have made its way far and near. The Manchester St. Cecilia Society gave the first performance in England in 1875, under Mr. Edward Hecht: two years later it was heard in Liverpool, under the composer's direction; and one of the scenes, the banquet with the Pheacians, some time ago passed into the repertory of the Bach choir. To this Society, however, is due the presentation of the work in its integrity for the first time before a London audience. The series of scenes included in the score comprise an orchestral prelude, and "Odysseus on the Island of Calypso," "Odysseus in Hades," "Odysseus and the Sirens," and "The Storm at Sea," in the first part; with "Penelope mourning," "Nausikaa and her Maidens," the "Banquet with the Pheacians," "The return home," "Festival in Ithaca," and final chorus in the second. The most effective and attractive number is that dealing with the Sirens, where some really admirable writing is met with, and melody is not totally set aside. The storm again presents some good points, and the banquet, with its lavish employment of voices, is

stirring and vigorous. The shape of the whole thing, however, is cumbersome, the instrumentation persistently overdone, and the struggle after effects which never arrive too strenuous. Reduced to half its length, and with the score lightened of some of its superfluities, *Odysseus* might become acceptable, on account of the "happy moments" which it unquestionably contains: but in its present form it has only the slenderest chance of becoming popular with English amateurs.

The performance, on the part of the choir, was fairly good, the tenors attacking their high notes with abundant energy, and the sopranos keeping well up to pitch. There was little variety of tone-colour, but this was hardly to be expected. Herr Max Bruch conducted, Mr. Frederick King sustained the laborious character of Ulysses, and other parts found capable exponents in Miss Carlotta Elliot, Madam Max Bruch, Mr. C. Beckett, and Mr. Kempton.

HENRY LESLIE'S CHOIR.

HAPPILY reorganized, the choir which for a quarter of a century won renown for itself and its originator, Mr. Henry Leslie, has commenced a new term of artistic existence, under the able guidance of Mr. Alberto Randegger. This country is particularly rich in madrigals, glees, and part songs, and their neglect would be a blow to the cause of one of the most delightful departments of musical art. In a choir such as that bequeathed—the term is an apt one, though, fortunately the bequest was not a residuary one, Mr. Leslie being still well and hearty—by the conductor whose name it yet bears, the opportunity survives, and the stimulus exists for the preservation of our national school of vocal part-music. The preliminary Concert, under Mr. Randegger's *bâton*, took place, it will be remembered, last July, when Mr. Leslie's new dedicatory work was produced with marked success; this, however, was but a test performance, and the real commencement of operations may be held to date from the beginning of the present series of four subscription Concerts, on February 22nd, 1883. In the programme itself there were perhaps fewer specimens of the old school than might have been wished, but new works by Mr. Josiah Booth, F. Westlake, Maud V. White, and J. G. Calcott, were brought forward with effect, while the names of Weekes, W. Macfarren, Pinsuti, Gounod, Schubert, and J. C. Bach, figured upon the list of authors supplying the fare. Mr. Booth's sacred part-song, "The Mighty Caravan," without showing any extraordinary originality is both an able and an agreeable work, destined no doubt to become popular with choral societies. The same remark applies with equal force to Mr. Calcott's secular part-song, "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank," a fanciful and musician-like production. Both authors conducted their own compositions. Miss Maude Valerie White's new song, "My soul is an enchanted boat," follows too closely the idiosyncrasies of M. Gounod's style to be altogether commendable, for the simple reason that imitation infers the absence of creative power; but it is clever, and suits Miss Santley—who sang it to perfection. Miss Marian Burton and Mr. Santley were the other solo-singers, Miss Santley and Miss Maude White also assisting as duettists at the pianoforte. Mr. Randegger had a hearty welcome from the audience and members of the choir alike, and no doubt can exist that under his influence the Society will continue to do well.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.

STRENUOUS efforts have been made of late to improve the position of the Philharmonic Society, which was fast lapsing into its dotage. Now, two orchestral rehearsals precede each Concert, people who like to pay five guineas for the privilege of adding the initials "F. P. S." after their name are allowed to contribute to the Society's pecuniary resources, and the fee of three guineas with the yearly subscription of a guinea, will confer upon the elect the dignity of an associate. The Society should, therefore, begin to live anew, since what it gives costs nothing (the extra rehearsal excepted) and what it takes goes to augment the general fund. Englishmen sit upon the directorial board, without even a leaven of foreign blood, and altogether the time seems ripe for those reforms which have been so much needed. No one wants to grumble over the fact that German music is in the ascendant, because if the subscribers wished for English music—and they evidently do not—the directors would give it; besides which, the circumstance of its being German does not necessarily imply that it is unworthy of notice. The opening Concert calls for no remark save that Madame Sophie Menter played—which was an attraction, certainly—and that the prelude to *Parsifal* was included in the scheme. The Dead March in *Saul* was given in honour of Wagner. At the second Concert the always popular Spanish violinist, Senor Sarasate, made his first appearance in London since 1879, and secured an immense audience, even the critics being moved back amongst the hindmost benches to make room for the paying public. Doubtless the result was extremely gratifying to the directors, but still it cannot be included in the list of artistic successes. Senor Sarasate interpreted Mendelssohn's violin concerto in a manner to which amateurs have become familiar—with wonderful technique, but an almost complete absence of emotional expression. Some of his phrasing was decidedly faulty, and the last movement was taken at such a pace that it became a mere scramble as to which of the orchestral performers should be first at the game of "follow my leader." Bach's suite in D; Raff's *Im Walde* symphony; and the overture to *Tannhäuser* were the other leading features, the vocalist being Mdme. Rose Hersee.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.

THIS Society has entered upon its first season, and made a step in the right direction by commencing with M. Gounod's *Redemption*—we say so apart from any consideration we may feel for the work—that being the latest manifestation in the field of sacred music. The Gallic composer has got the public by the ear, this time, and so long as he plays, the public will pay to come in and listen. The rendering of the *Redemption* was not wholly free from blemish, still it was very good on the whole, the choir exhibiting excellent qualities, and the orchestra obeying the slightest behest on the part of the conductor. Perhaps Mr. Halle's *tempi* were not always in accordance with M. Gounod's, but only the connoisseurs complained. The vocalists were Miss Mary Davies, Miss Edith Santley, Miss Hilda Wilson, Messrs. H. Guy, Burgon, and Santley—a cast altogether competent, albeit open to question on a certain point. The utterances of the Saviour ought, above all, to be kept distinct from the rest, and though Mr. Santley accomplished a great feat in singing the Redeemer's part and that of the bass narrator, an artistic mistake was

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nevertheless committed. The vocalist himself attempted to draw a line of demarcation betwixt the two, but no one wishes to hear a fine vocalist ventriloquise—especially when he is in the grand form displayed by Mr. Santley on this occasion. If concert-givers will perform the *Redemption*, they must engage a full suite of singers, or be content with the consequences.

FROM THE PROVINCES.

SALISBURY.—Miss Aylward's Concerts of Chamber Music were resumed on Tuesday, February 13th, when the programme was of unusual interest, the works chosen being all by Beethoven. They were the Kreutzer sonata, the septet, and quintet in E flat for pianoforte and wind instruments. It is long since lovers of music here had an afternoon of so much enjoyment. The quintet held the first place in the programme, Miss Aylward taking the pianoforte part, those for oboe, clarionet, horn and bassoon, being played respectively by Messrs. G. Horton, Lazarus, T. E. Mann, and J. Winterbottom. The Kreutzer sonata for piano and violin followed, worthily executed by Miss Aylward and Mr. A. Burnett. We must mention particularly the delicacy and skill combined with thorough musical appreciation which marked Mr. Burnett's performance of the lovely *Tema con variazione*. Miss Aylward, too, showed the high qualities she possesses as a pianiste, and her rendering of the sonata was worthy of much praise. The Concert concluded with the septet. In this Mr. Burnett again took part, and led with his usual ability. Mr. W. H. Hill played the viola part, Mr. Trust the violoncello, and Mr. Augustus Aylward, the double bass. The clarionet, horn, and bassoon parts were again taken by Messrs. Lazarus, T. E. Mann, and J. Winterbottom.

LIVERPOOL.—At the Philharmonic Concert, of the 8th ult., Herr Max Bruch's chorus, *The Holy Family*, was again presented. There is much to be admired in this work, which is treated in a full and sympathetic manner, but raggedness of execution in some degree marred the effect. Gounod's March Religieuse from *Polyeucte* was excellently performed on the same evening. At the Society's tenth Concert, on the 28th ult., due honour was paid to the memory of Wagner, the Concert opening with the introduction to *Lohengrin*. The attraction of the evening was, however, the re-appearance of Herr Joachim, who played Spohr's concerto in A minor, Op. 47, and Tartini's *Il Trillo del Diavolo*. Both of these pieces gave the talented *maestro* ample opportunities for the display of his marvellous executive powers. Miss Santley was the vocalist.

The programme for Mr. Hallé's last Concert of the present season, was an exceptionally brilliant one. As a Wagner memorial The Funeral March in *Siegfried*, and the Ride of Walkyries were given, besides the introduction to the third act of *Lohengrin*. Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* formed another item, and Miss Orridge sang Dr. Pepusch's resuscitated cantata *Alexis* very pleasingly. Madame Norman-Neruda also appeared.

At the Ladies' Classical Concert on the 17th ult., an Organ Fantasie and Fugue, transcribed by Liszt from Bach, was given by Mr. Steudner-Welsing, who, as pianist, performed also in each of the other works presented.

Mr. William Lea, the manager of the popular Hope Hall Concerts, has engaged Madame Marie-Roze for his special Concert of the 10th inst. This enterprising gentleman has hit upon the novel idea of allowing his audience

to choose, by ballot, the leading vocalist for these "special" Concerts, which are held in the Philharmonic Hall.

Arrangements are rapidly progressing for the annual Concert given by the pilot's of the port each Easter Monday on behalf of the Seamen's Orphanage. In addition to a carefully arranged miscellaneous programme, selections will be sung from *The Pirates of Penzance*, by kind permission of Mr. R. D'Oyley Carte. Last year over £300 was raised for this excellent charity, and the prospects of the ensuing Concert appear equally bright.

The publication of a private letter, respecting the performance of *Graziella*, from Sir Julius Benedict to Herr Max Bruch, has been viewed with much astonishment in local musical circles. Although a very valuable testimonial to the abilities of the gentleman now conducting these Concerts, its publication was quite unnecessary, if intended as a defence of the policy which has been pursued, for it is well known, that whatever faults exist, Herr Max Bruch certainly has no share in them, and the Liverpool public will regret his loss, and wish him all success on his return to the Fatherland. It is asserted—with what amount of truth I am unable to say—that Mr. Hallé is to be the new conductor of the Philharmonic Society. If this be so, it is hoped that the wholesome competition which Mr. Hallé's Concerts have afforded in the past will be provided from some other quarter.

BIRMINGHAM.—On Thursday evening, the 15th ult., a capital Concert was given by the Birmingham Philharmonic Union, conducted by Dr. Heap. The programme was extremely miscellaneous and comprised nearly all sorts of pieces, from Mendelssohn's Forty-third Psalm to Ascher's "Alice, where art thou?"—Mr. S. Stratton gave another of his so-called "Popular Chamber Concerts," on Monday, February 26th. Owing to accidental circumstances the programme was scarcely so interesting as usual. As a rule these Concerts never lack novelties and if the performances were as meritorious as the programmes there would be little opportunity for adverse criticism. On Saturday, the 3rd inst., an admirable orchestral Concert was given at the Midland Institute. The programme comprised among other things Schumann's symphony in B flat, No. 1; two movements of Ferdinand David's violin concerto in D minor; Sterndale Bennett's caprice in E for pianoforte and orchestra; two charming little orchestral pieces, by Cowen, *Melodie* and *A l'Espagnole*, and Mozart's overture, *Die Entführung*. All these works were more or less well rendered by the band, under the conductorship of Mr. Stockley. Mr. T. M. Abbott was the solo violinist, and Mr. R. M. Wenn the solo pianist. On Tuesday evening, the 6th inst., Messrs. Harrison gave the fourth and last of their present Concerts. The programme was much more interesting and high class than usual. It consisted chiefly of orchestral pieces played by Mr. Charles Hallé's band. Madame Norman-Neruda and Mr. Hallé were the solo instrumentalists, and Miss Orridge and Mr. Santley the vocalists. A special feature of the programme was Spohr's violin concerto in D minor, the solo part of which was charmingly played, the orchestral parts being rendered with refinement and discrimination. The new orchestral committee of Musical Festival has been appointed. It consists of thirteen gentlemen, only two of whom can be said to have any musical knowledge or experience. Under these circumstances, it follows that the new committee will have to get musical help and guidance from outside.

MANCHESTER.—The last of Mr. Halle's Concerts will take place on Thursday next. His twenty-fifth season has been marked by a reproduction of most of the great works which he has given since he established his Concerts twenty-five years ago. While giving us a *résumé* of his quarter of a century's work, he could not unfortunately make us acquainted with any (one piece excepted) of the music issued during the last twelve months. The exception was Brah'm's pianoforte concerto, which Mr. Halle played with all his well-known skill, but failed to make pleasing. We are looking anxiously forward to March 15th, when Mr. Halle's orchestra and chorus will give a performance of Gounod's *Redemption*, for the benefit of the Manchester Infirmary.

The only novelty at the very enjoyable series of Gentlemen's Concerts, has been Villiers Stanford's serenade in G, which was first given at the Birmingham Festival. It was magnificently performed and much appreciated.

Mr. de Jong's Concerts were brought to a close on Saturday week, when the director took his annual benefit. The Free Trade Hall was crowded in every part. Madame Patey, Miss Marian Burton, Messrs. Edward Lloyd and Barton, McGuirk, and Signor Foli, were most heartily applauded and were in splendid voice. The most noticeable feature in these Concerts during the past season has been the wonderful improvement in the band.

Mr. J. K. Pyne's organ recitals on the splendid instrument in the Town Hall continue to draw immense audiences. His selections are generally good, and he plays them with great skill and taste.

GLASGOW.—Our short musical season is, practically, at an end. So far as the Concerts carried on by the Glasgow Choral Union are concerned, the success has been a thorough one, both from a musical and a financial point of view. The surplus cannot, indeed, fail to be highly satisfactory, and it will enable the executive, should they so decide, to return to the guarantors a good percentage of the heavy losses sustained in bygone seasons. In connection with this subject it may be of interest to state that, in one year alone, the gentlemen who undertook the financial responsibility of the scheme had to meet a deficit of £2,600. They were not, however, discouraged. On the contrary, no difficulty was experienced in renewing the guaranteed fund, and the praiseworthy perseverance of all concerned in fostering the musical interests of Glasgow has met with due reward. Touching the increased string contingent provided by the Committee for the past season's Concerts, a satisfactory tale is told. The tendency is, however, towards a still further enlargement of this section of the orchestra, and we are given to understand that the management have in view the selection of a band which shall number altogether 80 specially chosen instrumentalists. Possibly, next season's orchestra may not comprise more than 70 performers, but it is only, we apprehend, a question of a little time when the desired good will be reached. At the eleventh Concert, which took place in St. Andrew's Hall, on 13th ult., Handel's *Samson* was produced. It had not been heard at the hands of the Glasgow Choral Union since November, 1867, and thus the work claimed a certain measure of freshness. There was again a crowded audience, for the old Saxon master is still potent in an oratorio-loving country. It may be said that the performance throughout was generally an excellent one. On the following evening, the twelfth and last Concert of the subscription series was given. As a tribute to the memory of Richard Wagner, the "Dead March" from *Saul* opened the Concert, the large audience, of course, rising as the initial strains were

given out by the band. Liszt's symphonic poem, *Mazepa*, had the place of honour in the programme, but the "gigantic musical picture of the three days' terrible ride," failed to create an impression, other than that of *ennui*. The admirable translation of Victor Hugo's poem was contributed by Mr. James Richardson. Other items in the programme included the intermezzo, "On the Waters," from Mr. A. C. Mackenzie's *Jason*, yet another work which shows how rapidly and how artistically the young England school is coming to the front; Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture, and the Beethoven symphony, No. 7, in A. The performance of the latter was simply a superb one, the allegretto, in especial, being noticeable for the care bestowed by Mr. Manns and his band on the shades of expression throughout.

Mr. Manns, having been engaged at Sydenham, the Saturday Popular Concert, of 10th ult., was conducted by Mr. F. H. Cowen, who introduced, and for the first time of performance, an orchestral adaptation of his *Mélodie* and *A l'Espagnole*. These were originally written for the pianoforte, and in their new raiment the composer has again devised some dainty bits of instrumentation. Both numbers met with a hearty reception, the first being re-demanded, while an encore was also asked for the second one. Mr. Cowen's *Suite de Ballet*, "The language of the flowers," was revived on this occasion. Each of the familiar movements was played in almost faultless style, an observation which also applies to the manner in which the Beethoven symphony, No. 2, was presented. The popular young composer proved a no less acceptable *chef d'orchestre*, as the audience were not slow to perceive and declare. The final Concert pertaining to the Saturday series took place on 17th ult. The programme was the "Universal Suffrage" one, a notion first ventilated here by Dr. Hans von Bülow. A plébiscite had been taken at the Concerts given on the 10th and 14th ult., in accordance with use and wont, and, for the second time within local experience, Berlioz's "Symphonic Fantastique" headed the list. It carried a voting power of 432, a marked decline, however, as compared with the plébiscite for season 1881-2, when the Frenchman had 859 marks recorded in his favour. Votes to the number of 419 were given for Beethoven's "Pastoral" symphony. Mr. Cowen's "Scandinavian" finding third place in this section, with 394 tokens of favour. Amongst the overtures "Tannhäuser" (423) and "William Tell" (392) found as usual the leading positions. Mr. Arthur Sullivan's "Dance of Nymphs and Reapers" (330) headed the ballet airs, and Schubert's "Rosamunde" selection (195) led off the miscellaneous pieces. In the latter division Mr. Allan Macbeth's "Intermezzo" was second on the list (189). The audience was an abnormally large one, many being content with seats in the available portion of the orchestral platform, while hundreds were unable to gain admittance. At the close of the concert Mr. Manns received signal marks of favour, the audience cheering him as he again and again bowed his acknowledgments.

The couple of chamber Concerts given by M. Buziau, prior to his departure for London, again showed that Glasgow is not enthusiastic in its appreciation of the "quartet." Yet the attendance was not altogether discouraging. In point of fact, it was an improvement on the audiences drawn out to similar entertainments given here some two or three years ago. M. Buziau's scheme included Concerts at Ayr and at Greenock, and, next season, it is intended, we believe, to extend it, so as to comprise Edinburgh, Dundee, &c., &c.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEGLECTED INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

To the Editor of THE LUTE.

SIR,—All instrumental solos, with the exception of those for the piano and violin, are greatly neglected at our concerts. There are surely many who would enjoy a solo from other instruments. Violoncello solos are certainly played, but might be heard more frequently. When is a viola or double-bass solo performed?

What I want, however, to draw attention to mostly, is the almost total absence of solos for wind instruments. What is nicer to hear, occasionally, than a flute, clarinet or oboe solo? At the Promenades some light airs with variations, just to suit the noisy audiences, are played, but anything classical, never. Most of the great masters have written for wind instruments, Beethoven for the horn, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Spohr and Weber especially for the clarinet, Schumann for the oboe. I have always noticed that when wind instruments are introduced at the Popular Concerts they are well received. Note how popular are the Mozart quintett, Schubert octett, and Beethoven septett, but why stop at these? For the bassett-horn, clarinet and piano Mendelssohn has written two beautiful trios, Op. 113 and 114. For the clarinet and piano Schumann three pieces, Op. 73, Weber a grand duett, Op. 48, Gade a fantasiestück, Op. 43. For the flute, Kulhau and Fuerstenau have each written solos, which ought not to be neglected. For the oboe Schumann has three charming morceaux, Op. 94. A number of classical pieces are written for the horn, also the bassoon. All the above, and a host of others ought to be heard at our concerts. We can easily understand that solos for the cornet, trombone, euphonium, &c., are too loud for concerts, but the quieter wind-instruments, such as I have mentioned above, might surely be heard, and would give great pleasure to a large number of professionals and amateurs. Hoping I have not trespassed too much on your valuable space.—I am, &c.,

MOUTHPIECE.

HER MAJESTY'S Theatre has, to all appearance, heard the last of opera. Henceforth, it is to be devoted to entertainments of the Alhambra class, "a scintillation of splendour and a blaze of beauty." This will be indeed a change!

M. SAINT-SAENS' new opera *Henry VIII.*, has been produced at the Grand Opéra, and a full account thereof, from the pen of Mr. Campbell Clarke, appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* next morning. As a *prémière* is no test of public favour, we must wait in order to estimate the chances of the novelty. The librettists, it appears, have shown the boldness of their class, for when the Pope's Legate intervenes to prevent Henry's divorce from Catherine, the king actually calls the populace into Westminster Hall and harangues them on the subject of Romish tyranny. Imagine the haughty Tudor appealing to a mob!

YET more of Wagner. A grand memorial performance in honour of the dead musician was given at Vienna, in the large hall of the Conservatory of Music, on the 1st of March. The programme included Beethoven's *Sinfonia Eroica*, a recital of some verses to Richard Wagner, the Feuer-Musik from the *Goetterdammerung*, and parts of the first act of *Parsifal*. The orchestra of the Court opera was enlisted for the occasion, and was led in the symphony, by director Jahn; in Wagner's music, by Herr Hans Richter. Despite the suppression of all applause, a visible effect was produced by these happily-chosen portions of the dead master's works.

REVIEWS.

SMITH'S AMERICAN ORGAN COMPANY.

The Organist's Parlour Companion, a complete system of instruction for the American organ. By William S. Clarke, formerly organist of Berkeley St. Church, Boston, U.S.A.

We can recommend this book to students of the American organ. It contains a graduated series of lessons in the manipulation of the instrument, and is specially distinguished by a large number of selections from the works of popular composers. It is thus a book for hours of study and of relaxation—for the class-room and the drawing-room.

FORSYTH BROTHERS.

(I.) *Menuetto for Violin and Piano.* By Heinrich Müller. (II.) *Twenty Preludes for Piano.* By Stephen Heller. (III.) *Two Studies for the Piano.* By Stephen Heller.

No. I. is a graceful and pleasing composition admirably adapted for amateur use. Though easy it ranks very far indeed above commonplace. Nos. II. and III. speak for themselves through the well-known and honoured name of the composer, but we cannot let them pass without adding a special word of commendation. The Preludes, which embrace almost every variety of style and call for many forms of executive skill, are in effect studies of a high class. They are masterly things and full of musical as distinct from technical interest. Amateurs of ability should by no means overlook them. The studies are remarkable for a full share of Heller's fluency and sparkle, they demand a brilliant finger and repay its exercise.

METZLER AND CO.

Songs by Heinrich Hoffmann. (I.) *A Fiddler's Song.* (II.) *The Stolen Kiss.* (III.) *Not Worth Winning.* (IV.) *When First I saw Thee.* (V.) *Fill the Goblet.* (VI.) *The Longer the Better.*

It will be assumed, and rightly, that all these songs are worth looking at, since the occasions are rare on which Hoffmann fails to interest. No. I. is musically pleasing, but people who are not fiddlers will, perhaps, be unable to see why that class of instrumentalists should receive special favours from the fair. Nos. II. and III. may both pass as worthy recommendation. Their musical merit is decided, while the poetic subjects are treated in a semi-humourous vein such as clever singers can make effective. No. IV. is a pretty and expressive love song, as well adapted for the drawing-room as is No. V. for the convivial feast. We rank the last-named highly among things of the kind. There is in it the true ring of heartiness and jollity. No. VI. belongs to the same class, and presents the same merit. We should add that the original German of all the songs has been well rendered into English by Maria X. Hayes.

PATEY, WILLIS AND CO.

Three Gavottes in A, F and G, for the Pianoforte. By Gustav Merkel.

HERR MERKEL sustains his reputation in these charming little pieces, which are made all the more attractive by faithful reproduction from the antiquated model. It is hard to say which Gavotte bears off the palm, but, perhaps, many amateurs would vote for that in D, on account of its attractive melody and superior simplicity. All, however, are worth a place in the pianist's library, and to it we commend them.

THE POET'S CORNER.

LOST.

THE haunts that were thine, dear, shall know thee no more,

And my bosom shall yearn for the gladness of yore,
The hills shall not echo thy laughter and song
And thy flowers shall wither, once blooming and strong.

The stream that so proudly reflected thy charms,
The bird that so trustfully lay in thy arms,
The breeze that to fan thee and kiss thee was faint,
Shall welcome thee, sport with thee, never again.

But though thy dear mem'ry all others forget
There is one who will faithfully cherish it yet,
For the grace of thy presence will never depart
From what is thine only—the throne of my heart.

HERBERT BENNETT.

CANTABILE.

"IN a smooth and flowing style,"
Some pronounce it cantabile;
Other tongues that wag more freely,
Stretch it out to cantabile.
Pray respect him none too highly,
Who insists on cantabile;
And I'm sure you'll own him silly,
Who miscalls it cantabile.

F. S.

NEW YORK is this spring to be treated to a "grand festival" of Irish music. A large chorus has been rehearsing for some months past. *Erin-go-bragh!*

GOOUNOD, a short time since, conducted a performance of *The Redemption* at a private house in Paris. An American paper bitterly inquires why no injunction was served upon him.

FRAU WAGNER and King Louis of Bavaria have sanctioned twelve performances of *Parsifal*, between July 8th and 30th. The artists, who are now in active training, will be mainly taken from Munich.

MISS MARIAN BURTON, a young lady who has already won much favour in the concert-room, is to be Mr. Carl Rosa's contralto this season. That assiduous cultivator of native talent only wants now a light soprano to replace Miss Burns.

MISS GEORGINA BURNS, we regret to say, will not appear with Mr. Carl Rosa's company at Drury Lane this season. This leaves the *entrepreneur* without an *Esmeralda*; but he hopes, as do we all, that Madame Valleria may be persuaded to adopt the part.

Joconde will be produced at the Royal Italian Opera during the approaching season. It has been successful at St. Petersburg, where three of Mr. Gye's artists took part in it. The bringing out of *Le Tribut de Zamora*, with Madame Lucca in the principal character, is probable.

MR. THOMAS, the monarch of musical America, has decreed another alteration of pitch, already lowered last season a semitone. The chief argument in favour of this innovation is the consequent relief of the chorus-singers who have so long "striven to match the growing intensity of the modern orchestra."

THE Triennial Festival of the three choirs of Hereford, Worcester, and Gloucester will take place in the cathedral of the last-named city, in the week beginning September 3. Already the list of stewards for the occasion includes the names of one hundred and sixteen gentlemen.

A NEW YORK PAPER, criticising a pianist's performance, speaks of the instrument's "sensuous purity of tone and limpid clearness," combined with "sonority and solidity." The manufacturer's name is not mentioned. Another paper in the same city says of the same piano, that it was "a combination of tub and tin-pan!"

CONCERT-PARTIES are being formed under the sanction of the War-Office, to make the tour of the provinces for the benefit of the Cambridge Fund for old and disabled soldiers. The first, for which Miss Nancy Woodhatch and Miss Amy Carter are engaged, begins operations in about a fortnight. The garrison-towns especially will be visited.

MR. GEORGE GROSSMITH, at the expiration of the term of his present agreement with Mr. D'Oyly Carte nine months hence, is likely to abandon familiar comic opera for unfamiliar high comedy. The loss to the lyric stage will be a gain to the dramatic stage. To supply the place of *Iolanthe* should it fail to draw, the *Sorcerer* is in active preparation.

Heart and Hand, the English version of "Le Coeur et la Main" Lecocq's new opera, was produced last month at the Bijou Opera House, in New York. Criticism is adverse. While possessing some few bright airs—which was inevitable—the music as a whole is stigmatised as lacking "go" and the libretto is frankly branded as dull and stupid. Transatlantic criticism is nothing if not frank.

IN the February number of THE LUTE appeared a short note to this effect. "A reaction has set in. Wagner's 'musical mood at present is gentle and adverse to anything loud.'" As the news of the great master's death did not reach England till February 14th and THE LUTE had gone to press some days previously, of course the remark in no way referred to the unhappy event. It is indeed strange that such, according to his own statement, should have been Wagner's condition of mind just before his unexpected removal.

VIENNESE students held recently a mourning meeting for Wagner. Such gatherings are at the best idiotic and not over-refined, and this one in particular was marked by the extreme of bad taste. One orator in glorifying the dead composer, asserted as not the least of his virtues that he held a prominent position in the ranks of the enemies of the Jews. Naturally enough this led to such an outburst as to call for the interference of the police. However, annoying and harmful though it be, true admirers can afford to smile at the boisterous adoration of half tipsy youths.

MR. DIXON HARTLAND M.P., who has always been remarkable for his interest in such matters, has introduced a bill for the better supervision of places of amusement. The main purpose of the measure is to put all houses answering that description under the immediate jurisdiction of the Home Secretary and his officials, and so to ensure a more uniform system of inspection than at present prevails. It is desirable and probable that no opposition will be offered to so practical a scheme—anything will be better than the confusion and anomalies now existent.

